



Remarks to the UC Board of Regents

Ahmet Palazoglu, Chair of the Academic Senate

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Good afternoon, Regents, President Milliken, faculty, students, staff, and all members of the University of California community.

First, let me congratulate Regents Anguiano and Robinson as they take on the leadership of the Board as chair and vice chair and thank them for their commitment to and their passion for UC's mission and aspirations. I also welcome Alumni Regents-designate Paco Retana and Jessica Lum as well as Staff Advisor-designate Wendy Hunter Barker and Student Regent-designate Jordan Roiland, as they join the Board.

Provost Newman's decision to step down could not have been easy. She has led the University through one of its most challenging periods with grace and conviction. As we worked closely for the last two years, I came to respect her determination to do what's best for the University and how she always elevated and prioritized faculty excellence and welfare. While we may be losing a valued administrator, we are gaining a renowned scholar and leader who will continue her academic journey on the hill at Berkeley. I wish her all the best.

I am here today for my final time as faculty representative to the Board. In September, the Academic Senate Chair-designate Professor Susannah Scott will be joined by Vice Chair-designate

Professor Amani Nuru-Jeter to represent the faculty and take on the responsibility of advancing UC's mission in true partnership with both the Office of the President and the Board of Regents and in the best tradition of shared governance.

It has been a singular honor and privilege for me to serve as the Chair of the systemwide Academic Senate and to represent an exceptional group of faculty at an institution second to none. I am humbled by the trust placed in me to lead and I hope I was able to respond with a transparent, principled, and collaborative style. Being an academic leader during such a time of crisis and angst demands digging deep into one's soul and bringing out the true self. And history can judge if that was sufficient not only to meet today's challenges but to clear a path of hope and success for the future. My gratitude to all who shared their wisdom with me and supported me on this journey, especially my vice chair and friend, Susannah Scott. Thank you.

Now, changing gears, as talking about myself is never my favorite topic.

In May 2001, the Regents voted to pass Resolution 28 (RE-28) which reads as follows: "the University shall seek out and enroll, on each of its campuses, a student body that demonstrates high academic achievement or exceptional personal talent, and that encompasses the broad diversity of backgrounds characteristic of California."

Following the passage of RE-28, then-UC President Atkinson asked the Academic Senate to consider the adoption of undergraduate admissions evaluation procedures that would look at applicants in a comprehensive manner and utilize a variety of measures of achievement. Our current admissions policies and standards reflect the spirit of the RE-28 resolution and are consistent with the public

mission of the University of California to ensure every qualified student with the talent and determination to succeed may have the opportunity to benefit from a UC education.

The Academic Senate's Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) is charged "to advise the President and appropriate agencies of the Senate on matters relating to admissions of undergraduate students." BOARS' *Guidelines for Implementation of University Policy on Undergraduate Admissions* articulate 12 selection criteria that are designed to help campus admissions committees in implementing UC's review process.

A thorough review of our own admissions policies and standards is overdue. The systemwide Academic Senate will lead that discussion, follow the evidence wherever it leads, and ensure broad consultation to unite the community around what is important: UC's mission to serve students in offering them a path to a world-class education and a bright future.

The Academic Senate does not take its delegated authority from the Regents lightly. In responding to the ongoing challenges with defining and assessing students' college readiness, the Senate promises to hear the spectrum of voices, consider the available evidence, and arrive at policy decisions that are robust and sound. This decision-making never loses sight of the fact that our students are the center of attention, and their welfare and future success are our responsibility.

Our processes may be perceived by some as slow, but they will certainly be deliberative and inclusive. As a result, any policy recommendations the Academic Senate elevates to the Board for your ultimate approval will follow this blueprint. We also aim to seek alignment among the University's shared governance partners—not

a schism—in order to achieve a consensus, not a fractured outcome.

Great universities don't cling to old decisions simply because they were once the right ones. They revisit them as new evidence is presented and as changing circumstances demand it. I am confident the answer this time will emerge the same way it always does at the University of California—through careful analysis, open and respectful debate, and then reaching a thoughtful conclusion. That is how we ensure that a UC degree remains one of the world's greatest engines of opportunity for generations to come.

A recent editorial in the *New York Times* was headlined: “A Great University Undermining Itself.” Surely, they got the first half right.